



Evansville Economic Development Project

DRAFT 2-5-08

For review



**Evansville
Economic Development Summit**

Summit Report

Prepared by:

Whalen & Associates, Inc.

February 1, 2008

www.whalen.com



judy@whalen.com
608-455-2090



TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	3
SUMMIT SUMMARY.....	4
BACKGROUND.....	4
SUMMIT HIGHLIGHTS.....	5
KEY FINDINGS OF INTERACTIVE SESSIONS.....	9
TIMELINE FOR NEXT STEPS.....	11
FACILITATOR’S OBSERVATIONS.....	11
TOPICS FOR TASK FORCES.....	13
TASK FORCE VOLUNTEERS.....	14
TASK FORCE: ENTREPRENEURIAL ENVIRONMENT & NETWORKING.....	14
TASK FORCE: MARKETING.....	14
TASK FORCE: DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION.....	14
TASK FORCE: GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS.....	14
TASK FORCE: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.....	15
SESSION 1: SUMMARY OF RESOURCES DESIRED.....	18
SESSION 2: SUMMARY OF POSSIBLE TOPICS TO BE ADDRESSED.....	22
SESSION 3: SUMMARY OF EXPLORATION OF TOPICS.....	25
ATTENDANCE LIST.....	32
EVALUATION FORMS SUMMARY.....	35

Special recognition and thank you to City employees Ainae Soetaert, Evansville High School Career and Technical Education Work Experience student, and Amanda Beaver, UW-Whitewater student and former EHS Career and Technical Education Work Experience student, for their efforts in compiling the data from the Interactive Sessions that is included in the Appendix.

SUMMIT SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The Evansville Economic Development Committee contracted Whalen & Associates, Inc. in June, 2007 to design and facilitate a process that would result in an Economic Development Plan. The project fulfills an action item of Evansville's Smart Growth Plan. The Smart Growth Plan on page 133 states that Evansville "needs more commercial and industrial development to permit the City to reduce its relatively high property tax rate without reducing services." The project's planning team - consisting of Mayor Sandy Decker, City Administrator Dan Wietecha, Chamber of Commerce Promotional Director Bridgit Larsen and consultant Judy Whalen began meeting in July, 2007. A series of information gathering activities were designed to provide data from which an economic development plan would be developed. The major information gathering activities included:

- **Focus Groups** – Five focus groups were conducted August 27-28, 2007. Representatives from 26 businesses in the categories of agribusiness, manufacturing, construction/development, retail and service participated in the focus groups. The purpose of the focus groups was to:
 - To gather information about major concerns about economic development
 - To create awareness about the City's commitment to economic development
 - To gather ideas and assess interest in an Economic Development Summit.
- **Phone Survey** – Through collaboration with the Small Business Development Center at UW-Whitewater, 135 businesses were identified to be contacted by the SBDC. Thirty-three phone surveys have been completed as of January 20, 2008. The phone survey will continue until all of the 135 businesses have been contacted at least once.
- **Summit** – The Economic Development Summit was conducted January 12, 2008 to provide business representatives the opportunity to provide further input into the topics that should be

addressed in the Economic Development Plan. The agenda included two speakers addressing entrepreneurship and ways to differentiate your business, a summary of the focus groups that were conducted and three interactive sessions during which participants explored topics related to economic development. Resources from the Summit are available on the City's website:
www.ci.evansville.wi.gov/Summit.htm

SUMMIT HIGHLIGHTS

■ Attendees

- Total Attending: 93
- Characteristics of attendees:
 - Special Guests:
 - Representative from Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin's office
 - State Representative Brett Davis
 - Rock County Economic Development Agency
 - Town of Center Supervisor/Plan Commission – 3
 - Town of Porter Supervisor
 - Town of Union Supervisor
 - Evansville Common Council – 6
 - Evansville Economic Development Committee – 4
 - Evansville School Board – 4
 - Evansville School District Administrator
 - Evansville Redevelopment Authority - 6
 - Juneau County Economic Development Corporation
 - UW-Whitewater, Small Business Development Center
 - SW Wisconsin Workforce Development Board
 - UW-Rock County
 - Chamber of Commerce Board Members
 - Evansville High School
 - Career and Technical Education Work Experience Program High School Teacher
 - High School Students - 11

- Local Business Representatives: 58
- Planning Team: 4

Note: Some individuals represent multiple categories. As a result, the numbers above will not total 93.

■ **Keynote Presentation: “Catch the Culture”**

Terry Whipple, Executive Director, Juneau County Economic Development Corporation

- 20% of what we know today will be obsolete in the next year
- 70 % of products today will be obsolete in six years
- We are currently educating students to hold jobs with equipment that is not yet in existence.
- The world of the 21st Century is going to be different than the past.
- Manufacturers are considering not building plants because by the time the facility is built, it is obsolete.
- Be radical in your thinking.
- The old way of doing things dies away.
- The fast eat the slow.
- New opportunities spring up at a fast rate.
- You can’t win the game if you don’t play.
- There are more text messages being sent everyday than the number of people on the earth.
- 20% of Google’s offices are virtual.
- Kids are interconnected around the world.
- It is an amazing time we live in.
- Location does not mean anything anymore. You can do business anywhere in the world because of the internet.
- Develop a commitment to life-long learning.
- Create the entrepreneurial culture.
- Juneau County was “the worst of the worst” for economic development, business growth and entrepreneurial development.
- A variety of resources are available to entrepreneurs, but they do not know how to access them or utilize their services.
- The first Inventors and Entrepreneurs Club was launched to provide a network of support for inventors and entrepreneurs, to change the culture, and to build a base of people who fit with the 21st Century.
- Today there are over 50 I&E clubs in the US.
- I&E clubs were the first grassroots organizations to change the culture of entrepreneurship.

- Seven steps of exploring an idea:
 1. TEACH people the proper steps to exploring and commercializing an idea.
 - Explore the idea
 - Look at the culture we live in. Does the culture support failure? Failure is a necessary part of success.
 - Accept that entrepreneurship is a journey.
 2. Bring people together to MOTIVATE each other and to tap into each others' networks.
 3. Bring people together to EDUCATE each other.
 4. Bring people together to SHARE their networks with each other.
 5. DIRECT them TO the numerous federal, state and local RESOURCES as soon as possible.
 6. EXPECT innovation/entrepreneurship to be A JOURNEY, with success and failures.
 7. The most vibrant mix is inventors, entrepreneurs (business/sales), existing businesses and investors. In other words, the whole COMMUNITY.
- Entrepreneurs don't need advanced degrees. They need a passion for what they do.

** A number of people asked for the Seven Steps. We contacted Terry Whipple to clarify the steps identified above.*

■ ***“Differentiating Your Business from the Competition”***

Bud Gayhart – Program Director, UW-Whitewater, Small Business Development Center

- The challenges of rural community development include: people being less loyal, being worldlier and having less time.
- There are opportunities for all business segments to “make converts” and attract people to support local businesses.
- Opportunities for retail businesses include adjusting hours of operation, expanding services, utilizing internet access, and exceeding customers' needs and expectations.
- Opportunities for agribusiness and commercial businesses include developing a “want list” for the type of labor desired, implementing a plan to attract and retain the desired type of labor

pool and collaborating with area resources including technical colleges and universities.

- Opportunities to convert “worldly residents” to “local business supporters” involve developing methods for their involvement in the community so they view their location as their “community of choice.”
- Making accommodations to meet the needs of residents is important at all levels of service in the community including businesses, city government, and community service organizations.
- Maximizing relationships with collaborative partners is another opportunity to assist in differentiating a business or community. Collaborative partners include: the Evansville Chamber of Commerce, Blackhawk Technical College, UW-Whitewater and its Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and its Wisconsin Innovation Service Center (WISC.)

■ **Judy Whalen, Whalen & Associates, Inc., Focus Group Report**

- Five focus groups were conducted August 27-28, 2007 to:
 - Gather information about the major concerns about economic development
 - To create awareness about the City’s commitment to economic development
 - To gather ideas and assess interest in an Economic Development summit.
- The major areas of concern were:
 - Workforce development
 - Marketing – their businesses, Evansville as a community and encouraging people to shop locally
 - Communication, collaboration and cooperation – with neighboring towns, with the city and with other businesses
 - Balance between the requirements of government and the needs of business owners

- Becoming a destination – for shopping, tourism and recreation
- Creating jobs that pay a livable wage

(For the full report, see the City's website www.ci.evansville.wi.gov.)

KEY FINDINGS OF INTERACTIVE SESSIONS

- **Interactive Session #1** - The purpose of the session was to begin developing a network for business representatives and entrepreneurs. Attendees were pre-assigned to a table of eight people. Each person introduced themselves and told the others about their business. Each table submitted a summary of the resources, alliances, or needs that each person indicated would help their business be more successful. The topics most often mentioned include:
 - **Marketing** – Cooperative advertising for the existing businesses, marketing the City, marketing to attract new businesses
 - **Networking opportunities** – The business representatives need more opportunities to get together and talk about their businesses and explore how they can maximize each other's networks.
 - **Workforce development** – Resources are needed to address the full spectrum of existing and potential workers. – training for the currently employed to keep their skill sets current with changing environments; skill development for the unemployed to help them become employable; training for high school students to help them transition more easily into the workforce; and training and creating an atmosphere for innovative, creative ideas.

(See Appendix for Session #1: *Composite List of Desired Resources*.)

- **Interactive Session #2** – The purpose of Session #2 was:
 1. To brainstorm topics that could be part of the economic development plan
 2. To select and prioritize the top three to five topics that should be addressed in the economic development plan.

A total of 75 topics surfaced by combining the brainstormed lists submitted by the tables. This represents only the raw lists of topics without any sorting or consolidating for duplication of topics.

Each table then selected the top three to five of their topics and prioritized them. The topics ranking in the top priorities include networking, marketing, workforce development, downtown revitalization, infrastructure, and government relations.

(See Appendix for complete list of Session #2: *Topics to be Considered*)

- **Interactive Session #3** – The purpose of Session #3 was to explore selected topics in greater depth with the intent of providing this information to the task forces that will develop the action steps for the economic development plan. The participants selected the topic of their choice and explored the topic with others who had also selected it. The key topics that were selected from the list of brainstormed topics are:
 - Agribusiness
 - Developing a Cooperation Culture
 - Downtown revitalization
 - Engaging Commuters
 - Engaging the Youth
 - Finding Resources
 - Government Relations
 - Infrastructure – including utilities, internet access, wireless
 - Marketing
 - Networking for businesses
 - Overhauling the Economic Development Committee
 - Transportation
 - Workforce development

(See Appendix for Session #3: *Key Elements of Topics*)

TIMELINE FOR NEXT STEPS

The next steps are:

- **Economic Development Committee** – Review draft Summit Report and discuss potential topics to be addressed in the Economic Development Plan. **January 22, 2008**
- **Project Planning Team** – finalize topics, form task forces, assign topics to task forces – **by January 31, 2008**
- **Task Forces** – meet, discuss key elements of assigned topic, refine goal, determine objectives and action steps – **by March 31, 2008**
- **Economic Development Committee** – review and revise task force action plans – **by May 31, 2008**
- **Common Council** – Consider budget requests related to Economic Development Plan as part of annual budget process – **June 30, 2008**

FACILITATOR'S OBSERVATIONS

The following items are the personal observations of the facilitator and are offered to provide an insight into the participants' interaction and reactions.

- The participants were very positive and appreciative of the opportunity to discuss economic development.
- Men outnumbered women which seems somewhat unusual since women are starting businesses at a higher rate than men. (37 women: 56 men)
- People seemed to easily interact with other people at their table.
- The participants stayed engaged right to the end of the day. The responses submitted by each table after each interactive session indicate the group followed the directions and gave careful thought to the assigned question.
- The participants are greatly concerned that this effort produces change. They want to see follow-through and results.
- Getting 26 people to volunteer to sign-up for the task forces at the Summit is a huge accomplishment and indicates an ongoing interest that needs to be nurtured.

- The 11 high school students from Mr. Kyle McDonald's Career and Technical Education Work Experience program were a great asset, not only to the smooth functioning of the Summit, but also to gaining the perspective of young people during the interactive sessions. Students served as greeters, staffed the registration table, handled the audio-visual equipment and PowerPoint programs, and were personal assistants. They demonstrated professional capabilities, enthusiasm and interest.
- It is amazing what can happen when "the power of a team" takes over. Making the Summit a success involved the efforts of a wide variety of people including:
 - The Project Planning Team
 - City employees
 - Co-op students
 - Evansville High School Teachers
 - EHS Custodial Staff
 - EHS Catering Staff
 - Evansville School District
 - Focus Group participants
 - Resource speakers
 - Economic Development Committee members
 - Chamber of Commerce Board members

TOPICS FOR TASK FORCES

A composite list of possible topics generated from Session 2 was reviewed by the Economic Development Committee January 22nd. The Committee refined the list so that some topics were elements of broader topics. They decided the following list of topics captures the topics identified during the Summit and are the topics to be assigned to the task forces for further exploration.

- Entrepreneurial Environment & Networking
- Marketing
- Downtown Revitalization
- Governmental Relations
- Workforce Development

Task forces will be formed to develop the goal and appropriate implementation strategy to address their assigned topic. Each topic will be explored in depth using the information gathered through the focus groups, phone survey, and Summit. Resource people will be available to the task force if they desire to gather more information. Each task force will develop one goal for their assigned topic. Each goal may have several objectives to address the various key factors of the topic. Each objective will have a detailed set of action steps focusing on economic development to achieve the objective. When all the task forces have completed their work, the complete set of goals, objectives and actions plans will be presented to the Economic Development Committee for review and crafting into the final Economic Development Plan.

Organizational meetings for the task forces will be held during the first week of February. Task forces will work during February and March. Draft action plans for topics to be included in the Economic Development Plan will be presented by each task force to the Economic Development Committee in April, 2008.

TASK FORCE VOLUNTEERS

TASK FORCE: ENTREPRENEURIAL ENVIRONMENT & NETWORKING

- Lori Allen
- Gene Bass
- John Gishnock
- Cindy Hammer
- Eric Larsen
- Bill Lathrop
- Wally Shannon
- Denise Sobeski

TASK FORCE: MARKETING

- Roger Berg
- Bud Gayhart
- Brad Goodspeed
- Nicole Huff
- Bob Kuha
- Greg Marshall
- Don & Shanna Meggers
- Other invitees not yet confirmed

TASK FORCE: DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

- John Decker
- Rebecca DeMarb
- Cheryl Fuchs
- Jim McGoey
- Tammy Splitstoesser
- Tony & Jean Wyse
- John Gishnock
- Other invitees not yet confirmed

TASK FORCE: GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

- Betsy Ahner
- Heidi Carvin
- Kelly Gildner
- Barb Jacobson
- Jim Kopecky
- John Morning



- Other invitees not yet confirmed

TASK FORCE: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Jim Brooks
- Julie Hermanson
- Michael Pierick
- Tina Rossmiller
- Sandy Sayarath
- Other invitees not yet confirmed

APPENDIX

- **Session #1 Summary – Resources Desired**
- **Session #2 Summary – Possible Topics to Address**
- **Session #3 Summary - Exploration of Topics**
- **Attendance List**
- **Evaluation Forms Summary**



SESSION 1: SUMMARY OF RESOURCES DESIRED

Table	Type of Collaboration
1	Local materials, building materials, contractors
1	Housing market crunch, needs to keep moving
1	Landscape materials
1	Printing, office supplies
1	Innovative ideas to generate income (seasonal gaps)
1	Solid, trustworthy contractor relationships (building contractors, real estate companies)
1	City services (roads, fire) - cost and ability to get work done
1	Innovative ideas for filling seasonal gaps (create think tank)
1	Input & feedback from community
1	Expand on their ability to share their existing resources
2	Power cost, reliability, quality
2	Formal networking
2	Workplace flexibility for parents to visit
2	Off-shift day care
2	Networking
2	Sponsorships
2	Networking
2	Need to explain what local businesses contribute
2	Power cost, reliability, quality
2	Flexible day care
2	Outreach/Networking
2	Growth in non-residential tax base
2	Networking
2	Industrial growth
4	Lack local workforce to tap into
4	Community recognition, marketing
4	Financing, financial assistance
4	Local recognition
4	Advertising
4	Location to become a destination
4	Hoping for a primarily local customer base
4	Advertising/Recognition
4	In process of developing business plan
4	Emphasize the need to evolve
4	Emphasize marketing strategies and networking
5	Needs cooperative advertising, promotions (bus tours, etc.)
5	Retail shops needed, coordinate extended hours



- 5 Capture commuter market to do banking in town
- 5 Awareness of new services
- 5 Need resource list
- 5 Moving office to Evansville? - Employee? Space?
- 5 Insurance needs
- 5 Growth prohibited
- 5 Space for business
- 5 Collaboration with city
- 5 Health care
- 6 Other attorneys in Evansville
- 6 Business developments
- 6 Workforce development
- 6 Countywide, statewide assistance
- 6 Word of mouth and web
- 6 Needs info on community
- 6 Looking for future expansion business area
- 6 Collaborate with other businesses
- 6 Word of mouth contacts, networking
- 6 Needs more creative employees
- 6 Marketing
- 6 Schools need instructors and school board to communicate with business community to train workers of tomorrow
- 7 Training needs (school programs)
- 7 Help bigger companies
- 7 Slight decrease in taxes
- 7 Office supply company
- 7 Growing their businesses locally; stay in Evansville and grow around Evansville
- 7 Funded by donations, want \$1.5 million more before start
- 7 Losing business for local companies because they go to different town to do workout, then go shopping and other stuff
- 8 Educating EE, training classes
- 8 Join trade organizations
- 8 Location
- 8 Trades - no experience
- 8 Employees need to have basic skills
- 8 Working with banks to get a loan is very difficult
- 8 How to promote your business and compete in the market place
- 9 How to market?
- 9 Loans, expanding space
- 9 Marketing
- 9 Expand to teenagers



- 9 Need marketing within Evansville so people are not going to Madison/Janesville for skin care
- 9 Cocktail parties to network
- 9 Place to teach stained glass
- 9 "Art mall"
- 9 Wireless town
- 9 Market "slow food"
- 9 Foster small town charm
- 9 Know more people, networking
- 9 Internet networking
- 10 Open roads
- 10 More activities in our park to help draw outsiders promoted by the city
- 10 More of a personal one on one with the customers
- 10 Business is very internet dominated
- 10 Motel
- 10 FedEx
- 10 City working with businesses on transition into the community
- 10 More skills
- 10 "Assistant farmer"
- 10 Employees wanting to do a good job
- 10 Opening the community up to the younger generation
- 10 Creativity, tools
- 10 Community action
- 10 Welcome new families
- 12 Supplier for maintenance equipment and repair
- 12 Contractors for services
- 12 Lots of ideas, where to start
- 12 How to focus
- 12 Want to do everything herself, risk of hiring
- 12 Motor repair in Janesville is 3 week backlog, no one willing to learn the trade
- 12 Need to market the City, we are here to serve
- 12 Role of schools in developing future entrepreneurs
- 12 Entrepreneur web resource, virtual I&E club
- 12 Wider variety of suppliers, competition
- 12 No local suppliers, need to run to Janesville or sales rep calls/order
- 13 Youth mentors, role models
- 13 Invest in kids to become interested in community to stay in community
- 13 Lack of things for middle school students to do
- 13 Kids are available to tutor adults in computer skills
- 13 Need advertisers
- 13 Work with city - repetitive services, timely billings



- 13 Are all engineering fees fair and necessary?
- 13 Developers - fair costs and services
- 13 Need for business individuals to put aside competitive concerns (collaborate)
- 13 Lack of networking with realtors
- 13 Learn to play together in sand box
- 13 Marketing through realtors

SESSION 2: SUMMARY OF POSSIBLE TOPICS TO BE ADDRESSED

Table	Topic	Priority
1	▪ I/E CLUB TO PROMOTE	1
1	▪ ENHANCE EXISTING BUSINESS	2
1	▪ FUNDING EDUCATION	
1	▪ SUPPORT/PROMOTE LOCAL ECONOMY	3
1	▪ EVALUATE WHAT BUSINESSES WE HAVE AND THOSE WE NEED	4
1	▪ INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT EXPANSION	
1	▪ CREATE LOCAL JOBS	
1	▪ MARKETING EVANSVILLE	5
1	▪ DIVERSITY (BUSINESS)	
1	▪ ECONOMIC COMMITTEE	
1	▪ EXPAND ROLL OF ED/CHAMBER CROSSOVER -BRIDGIT	
1	▪ KNOW DESIRE OF COMMUNITY	
1	▪ INVENTORY OF BUSINESS	
1	▪ EDUCATION	
1	▪ CULTURE OF COMMUNITY	
2	▪ ENERGY ELECTRICITY & GAS	1
2	▪ COOPERATION CULTURE	2
2	▪ BUSINESS SUPPORT	3
2	▪ TRANSPORTATION	4
2	▪ ELECTRICITY	
2	▪ NATURAL GAS	
2	▪ COLLABORATION/NETWORKING	
2	▪ DESTINATION LOCATION	
2	▪ ATTITUDE	
2	▪ INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT	
2	▪ ONE STOP TO HELP NEW BUSINESSES	
2	▪ PARKING DOWNTOWN	
2	▪ ASSEMBLING & COMMUNICATING FACTS REGARDING BUSINESS	
2	▪ PARKS LAKE LEOTA	
2	▪ OPPORTUNITIES	
2	▪ I&E CLUB (EVANSVILLE, UNION, MAGNOLIA AREA)	
2	▪ RESTAURANTS	
2	▪ SUBGROUPS (MARKET SEGMENTATION)	
2	▪ HOTEL	
2	▪ DAY CARE	
2	▪ MAINTAINING QUALITY SCHOOLS	
2	▪ SERVING COMMUTERS	



4	▪ WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	1
4	▪ A COMMUNITY-WIDE MARKETING PLAY	2
4	▪ ANOTHER BIG COMMUNITY EVENT	3
4	▪ AUCTION OF SPECIAL PROJECTS	4
4	▪ BIKE EVENT	5
4	▪ DOWNTOWN CITY GRAND PRIX (GO KARTS)	
4	▪ WORK STUDY PROGRAM	
4	▪ A HIGH SCHOOL-COOPERATIVE PROGRAM	
5	▪ DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION	1
5	▪ PROMOTION OF GREEN BUSINESS, PRODUCTS RENEWABLE ENERGY	2
5	▪ RECREATION, PARK, CAMPING, TRAILS, POOL	3
5	▪ INFRASTRUCTURE	4
6	▪ GOVERNMENT RELATIONS	1
6	▪ EDUCATION/INFORMATION	2
6	▪ ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY	3
7	▪ PEOPLE TO COME TO EVANSVILLE/GROWTH	1
7	▪ INTERNET	2
7	▪ TRANSPORTATION	3
8	▪ COMMUNITY MARKETING EFFORT	1
8	▪ DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION	2
8	▪ CONNECT BUSINESSES TO EDUCATION RESOURCES	3
8	▪ MORE LOCAL EMPLOYMENT	4
8	▪ BUSINESS (BOOSTING)	5
9	▪ FORMAL BUSINESS NETWORKING OR DIRECTORY	1
9	▪ ENGAGE COMMUTERS	2
9	▪ VARIETY/QUALITY/SELECTION	3
9	▪ TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES	4
9	▪ FINANCIAL SUPPORT	5
10	▪ ORGANIZATION; EVENTS (younger age developed)	1
10	▪ UNDERSTANDING EXISTING BUSINESSES' PREDICAMENTS; WORKING W/ THEM TO RESOLVE ISSUES	2
10	▪ EXPANDING & DIVERSIFYING THE RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN THE COMMUNITY	3
10	▪ ATTRACT MORE SMALL INTENSE FARMING OPERATIONS. THIS IS A TREND IN FARMING.	4
11	▪ COMMUNITY PROMOTION	1
11	▪ SMALLER ROTATING BUSINESS NETWORKING MEETING	2
11	▪ TOURISM	3
11	▪ DIRECT NEW & EXISTING BUSINESS GROWTH	4
12	▪ COMMUNICATION	1
12	▪ BUSINESS CLUB	2



12	▪ NEEDS OF COMMUNITY	3
12	▪ CAREER PLANNING	4
12	▪ VIRTUAL/NONVIRTUAL (REAL) BUSINESS CLUB	
12	▪ ACCESS TO CAREER PLANNING FOR ADULTS	
13	▪ EXPAND ROLE OF ED (GREATLY)	1
13	▪ CULTURE	2
13	▪ INVENTORY	3
13	▪ KNOW DESIRE OF COMMUNITY	4
13	▪ EDUCATE COMMUNITY & BUSINESSES	5
13	▪ KEEP IN MIND THAT CHANGE IS REGULAR	

**Note: There was no one seated at Table 3 or 11.*

SESSION 3: SUMMARY OF EXPLORATION OF TOPICS

Topic: Agribusiness

Why is the topic important?

The health of agriculture is related to the health of Evansville.

Key Elements:

- Want to increase the number of small, artisan (organic) farms
- Maybe organic farms can become a destination reason for Evansville
- Organic dairy closer to Evansville
- Farm & Fleet type store or other services for farmers
- Demand questionable for locally-grown food
- Power differential between large and small farms
- Big Question: Is there anything Evansville can do to encourage agribusiness?
- Can some businesses (Landmark or others) become a regional distribution center for organic farms?

Notes:

- Health of agriculture is related to health of Evansville (Landmark and related businesses)
- Small, artisan farmers
- Commercial agriculture
- No new farms
- Increased number of organic/small farms (maybe this is the destination-restaurants that serve local food, grocery stores that sell local food, etc.)
- Problems:
 - Land needs to be decent and in smallish parcels (ex. 35-80 acres)
 - Land shortage
 - What can the city or townships do to support more, smaller farms?

Topic: Cooperation Culture

Why is the topic important?

Because we have little cooperation in Evansville affected by intrinsic Midwestern culture to not cooperate. Community is the basis of cooperation.

Key Elements:

- Change the Midwestern culture to cooperation
- Municipal cooperation with local businesses is big issue among group
- Identifying industries that should cooperate amongst themselves
- What are types of cooperation:
 - Businesses to businesses
 - Government to businesses
 - Consumer to businesses
- Businesses need to buy it for the big vision in the sky-“Economic Vitality in Evansville”
- Finding common ground on big issues

- More education of community as to why there are so many regulations, laws, hurdles to overcome
- Local businesses actively helping each other
- Develop a list of industry, businesses that should be cooperating
- Chamber of Commerce-create subgroup to represent industry
- Spirit of competition limits cooperation-there are tons of ideas for changing this way of thinking
- City has culture

Notes:

- Cooperate for what?
 - Success of community
 - Success of business sector-competitors supporting each other
 - Find common ground - growth/no growth among opposing viewpoints
- What's working well/what do we have?
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Evansville Community Partnership (ECP)
 - Economic Development Summit
 - Location
 - Outside opinion seems positive of Evansville
- What cooperation do businesses need?
 - City & businesses-use local resources first
 - City support for new businesses-number of regulations, hours of operations, number of cars, signs, noise 8 pm-6 am and, assistance filling out forms - have them online
- Identify who/how businesses can cooperate with each other
- Word of mouth referrals
- Culture of pay it forward

Topic: Downtown Revitalization**Why is the topic important?**

Magnet to draw people to the downtown, heart of the community sense of place visit the history, incorporate with theme stores, re-unites the residents to meet and reconnect.

Key Elements:

- Funding for exterior renovation
- Open facade
- Parking by business owners not on Main Street
- Business public relations to recruit new retail
- Networking
- Corporate sponsor to promote downtown revitalization

Topic: Engaging the Commuters**Why is the topic important?**

Environment important

Key Elements:

- Our operations
- Meet their needs



- What is the story?
- Commuter focus group
- Statistics of engagements
- Benefits of local businesses
- Business hours of operation
- Common financing
- Communication infrastructure

Notes:

- What is the impact of this topic if ignored?
- We will become less relevant
- Virtual office

Topic: Finding Resources

Why is the topic important?

Currently business owners do not know where to go to get information to help them expand or improve their business.

Key Elements:

- Communication between government and business-city directory of who to contact for what
- Networking within the community (business to business)
- Grant money - Where do we get it?
- Learning how to write a grant proposal
- Programs available to help business cut costs (ex. Utility cost incentives)
- Business resource center

Topic: Government Relations

Why is the topic important?

To promote business growth balancing, need US growth, help businesses with start-up

Key Elements:

- Clear communications
 - Logistics/planning
 - Economy
 - Tax rates/ fees
- Networking
- Minimize road blocks
- Business start-up
- Protecting business and consumers
- Resource
- Utilize local, state and federal government resources
- Encourage intergovernmental cooperation



Topic: Infrastructure

Key Elements:

- Roads
 - Hwy 14 constraints hinder commuting to Madison and Janesville
 - Madison and Janesville reverse commute
 - Trucking
 - Condition
 - Lessen interference with business during construction
 - Cost to maintain town roads
 - Excess traffic from Evansville
 - Load limits/seasons
- Electricity
 - 3 phase-expand
 - Reliability
 - Quality
 - Cost
- Natural gas supply
- High speed, broadband internet
- Expanded fiber optic service
 - Telecommunications
- Community wide/area wide wireless service
- Meeting rooms, convention centers, etc.
- Industrial park
 - More land
 - Install infrastructure
 - Rail
- Wastewater treatment plant upgrade
 - Capacity
 - Quality of effluent
- Police, Fire, EMT
 - Full time EMT (shared among city and townships)
- Government infrastructure
 - Consolidate city and union township
 - Consolidate township halls
 - Less confusion-1 stop shop
- School infrastructure
- Cell phone coverage for all carriers

Topic: Marketing**Why is the topic important?**

We need to keep residents shopping in town. We need to promote our town to future business owners and prospective customers.

Key Elements:

- History of Evansville
- “Green City”
- Website of all Evansville businesses and community events
 - Possible link to/from school site
- Who pays to create/maintain site?
- Builderspot.com
 - 40-50 website templates
 - \$240/year
 - Hosting and maintenance
- John Ballard-website search optimization and design
 - Janesville
- Businesses are not connected/networking
- Chamber website needs to
 - List all businesses
 - Help businesses get a website linked to chamber site
- Traffic counts for Hwy 14
 - Wisconsin.gov
 - Agents
 - Traffic count
- Promote by internet
- Get into Chicago market if going to be marketed as “Destination Location”
- Get local businesses to promote each other
- Use Power & Light billing mailer to distribute local business info (free mailing)
- TV commercial
 - Local businesses participate financially cost share
 - Chamber-driven
 - Corporate sponsor-VP, Landmark, Baker Manufacturing
- Community flier at interstate rest stops

Topic: Networking**Why is the topic important?**

Businesses have needs that must use the net; networking and communication allow needs to be expressed to others who may be able to meet them. This can be mutual. Economic self interests

Key Elements:

- Willingness to participate
- Means by which to participate
- Database of interested parties
- Accessibility of participants to each other
- Cost effective means of exchanging services



Topic: Overhauling Economic Development (commission)

Why is the topic important?

The Economic Development committee is essential to build a strong commercial base.

Key Elements:

- Solid direction
- Coordinator position
- Yearly goals
- Visible/ accessible
- Proactive
- Can do attitude
- Don't say "why" say why not!
- Coordinator
 - Attends outside events
 - Point person for inquires
 - Advises committees

Topic: Transportation

Why is the topic important?

Transportation is one of the fundamental infrastructure resources that enable the Evansville area to connect to the regional, state, national, and international markets.

Key Elements:

- Politics
- Funding
- Ridership/demand
- Hours of operation
- Sustainability
- Geography
- Resource capacity
- Constituents
- K-16 Education
- Elderly
- Physically challenged
- Commuters
- Business to business
- Recreation and entertainment
- Publicly provided
- Privately provided
- Regional transit studies
 - SC WI Trans A Study
- Roads, rails, pedestrian, etc.



Topic: Utilizing Youth

Why is the topic important?

They are our future, greatest assets, tap into their energy.

Key Elements:

- Survey High School and Middle School students
 - Done by people who understand students
 - Someone to analyze and give to Economic Development group
- Work programs
- Mentorships
- Apprenticeships
- Volunteering opportunities
- Providing entertainment opportunities
- Retail

Topic: Work Force Development

Why is the topic important?

Blackhawk Tech doesn't produce employees (accountants) that will be compatible with today's business. We need employees from Evansville that live and work here. The economy has been good for many years; the young people do not have other experiences (down years).

Key Elements:

- Young people need to be taught early (at home) that they should be responsible at work
- High school trains by building houses
- Education doesn't produce good employees
- Chamber website-jobs available for posting

ATTENDANCE LIST

**Note: Alphabetized by first name*

Name	Company1	Company2	Table
Ainae Soetaert	Evansville High School		5
Alana Trumpy	Evansville High School		1
Amy Busse	Evansville High School		8
Art Phillips	Evansville School Board		7
Barb Jacobson	Evansville Common Council		9
Betsy Ahner	Evansville Redevelopment Authority		10
Bev Killeen	Evansville Auto Auction		5
Bill Lathrop	Artist		9
Bob Borremans	SW Wisconsin Workforce Development Board		3
Bob Carlson	Landmark Services Cooperative		1
Bob Kuha	Big Sweeties Pet Supply Center		16
Brad Goodspeed	Goodspeed Gas N Go		10
Bridgit Larsen	Evansville Chamber of Commerce		0
Bud Gayhart	Small Business Development Center	University of Wisconsin-Whitewater	4
Burt Wheeler	D & B Welding and Fabricating		7
Cheryl Fuchs	Otter Interiors/Exteriors		13
Chris Eager	Union Bank & Trust	Evansville Redevelopment Authority	1
Cindy Hammer	Hammer Builders		12
Dan Wietecha	City of Evansville		0
Dave Mosher	Dave Mosher & Associates		9
Dave Mueller	Earthwhile Inc.	Litewire Internet Services	7
David Sailing	Lighthouse Metals		16
Deanna L. Egger	Dee's Barber Shop		8
Declan Every	Entrepreneur		5
Denise Sobeski	All About You		9
Dennis Hatfield	Evansville School Board		2
Don Krajeck	Town of Union Board of Supervisors		8
Don Meggers	Entrepreneur		6
Eloise Eager	Allen Realty		8
Eric Larsen	ITAdvantage	Town of Union Plan Commission	5
Ethan Pierick	Evansville High School		9
Fred Juergens	Evansville Common Council		12



Gene Bass	Evansville Economic Development Committee		13
Gordy Andrew	Maple Grove Farms		1
Greg Hofmeister	Hofmeister Engineering & Surveying		6
Heidi Carvin	E Arts	Evansville Community School District	12
Helen Forbeck	Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin Office		2
James Otterstein	Rock County Economic Development Agency	Evansville Economic Development Committee	6
Janis Ringhand	Evansville Community/Senior Center	Evansville Common Council candidate	13
Jay Killeen	Evansville Auto Auction		10
Jean Loesch	The Black Sheep Yarn Shop		9
Jean Wyse	Guidone & Company Antiques		5
Jeff Farnsworth	State Farm Insurance	Chamber of Commerce Board	6
Jim Brooks	Evansville Community Theater	Evansville Plan Commission	2
Jim Kopecky	Piggly Wiggly		3
Jim McGoe	Artist		11
Jo Miller	Town of Center Plan Commission		6
John Decker	Decker Corporation	Evansville Redevelopment Authority	8
John Gishnock	Formecology		16
John Morning	Coldwell Banker Success Realty	President, Chamber of Commerce Board	10
Judy Whalen	Whalen & Associates, Inc.		0
Karen Aikman	Evansville Common Council candidate		11
Kathi Kemp	Eager Free Public Library		11
Kelly Gildner	Evansville Review	Sunland Development	13
Kelly White	Evansville High School		2
Kyle McDonald	Evansville Community School District		3
Larry Dobbs	Evansville Soybean Committee		11
Laura Alt	Evansville High School		10
Lauren Meredith	Evansville High School		3
Mary Libby	Evansville Community/Senior Center		7
Mason Braunschweig	Law Office of Mason C. Braunschweig	Evansville Common Council	6
Michael Pierick	University of Wisconsin-Rock County	Evansville School Board	8
Mike Halvensleben	Landmark Services Cooperative	Chamber of Commerce	11



		Board	
Mike Klassy	Bank of Evansville		11
Miles Meidinger	The Title Team LLC		13
Nicole Hamby	Roger G. Roth, CPA & Associates	Chamber of Commerce Board	4
Nikki Huff	Goodspeed Gas N Go		12
Pammi Sekhon	All 'N One		5
Paul Brunsell	Himself		16
Phil Hamilton	Town of Porter Board of Supervisors		12
PJ Spears	All About You		12
Rachael Ammerman	Evansville High School		6
Rebecca DeMarb	Shannon & DeMarb Law Office, LLC		9
Rep. Brett Davis	Wisconsin State Assembly		5
Richard Woulfe	Evansville Observer		0
Robert O'Leary	Evansville High School		12
Roger Berg	Berg Development	Evansville Economic Development Committee	2
Roger G. Roth	Roger G. Roth, CPA & Associates	Evansville Redevelopment Authority	8
Sandy Decker	Mayor, City of Evansville		0
Shanna Meggers	Entrepreneur		4
Shelley Bisch	Artist		10
Steve Lutzke	Orfordville High School Principal		3
Steven Pincus	TIPI Produce		16
Tammy			
Splittstoesser	Inside Out Expressions		4
Tara Porter	Evansville High School		7
Terry Whipple	Juneau County Economic Development Corp.		0
Tina Rossmiller	Evansville School Board		13
Tom Cothard	Advanced Seamless Gutters	Evansville Common Council	1
Tom Moon	Baker Manufacturing	Chamber of Commerce Board	3
Tommy Kremer	Evansville High School		4
Tony Wyse	The Pase Company	Evansville Common Council	4
Walter Shannon	Shannon & DeMarb Law Office, LLC		2
Wayne Udulutch	Town of Center Board of Supervisors		1

EVALUATION FORMS SUMMARY

Participants were asked to complete an evaluation form that asked three questions:

1. Please tell us about your experience at the Summit ex. Was it worthwhile? Did you make any connections that will help your business?
2. Please share any “Ah-Ha” thoughts that occurred during the Summit.
3. Is there anything else you would like us to know?

Of the 50 evaluation forms that were completed, 48 were very positive about the experience. Two felt the Summit did not meet their expectations.

Comments included:

- “Very worthwhile.”
- “Well worth my time.”
- “Made multiple connections.”
- The day was thoughtful and well-paced.”
- “Great resources.”
- “Good to see how many people came together.”
- “The group I worked with was exceptional brainstormers. I think the output from the Summit, when compiled will lay out a good roadmap for Evansville.”
- “The presentations were great, and they were very informative. It was a good experience to talk other business owners in the area.”
- “Learned new things from old contacts.”
- “Well organized and informative.”
- “I could feel the excitement and the energy.”
- “Very well orchestrated and helpful – a very strong tribute to Evansville.”
- “Very good breakout sessions.
- “We addressed a lot of items that certainly need attention and now we need to figure out implementation to begin the process.”

Some of the “Ah-Ha” moments include:

- “One-stop click on Evansville’s website to help businesses.”
- “People need to work together on group marketing of businesses.”
- “The fast eat the slow.”
- “Terry Whipple was an inspiration to the power of networking and collaboration.”
- “The area towns and cities need to work together.”
- “The number of businesses in the area.”
- “Develop a ‘preferred contractor/business program’ based on feedback from the community.”
- “Westside transportation problems are an economic development issue.”

- “Keep communication open.”
- “So much depends upon individual initiative and passion.”
- “There is information readily available that even well-informed people don’t know about. The work of communicating is never done.”
- “How similar members of the group thought about the importance of certain factors related to economic development.”
- “We can accomplish some things by utilizing technology.”
- “Passion is needed from both potential customer and business.”
- “Evansville’s economic development is in the works.”
- “20% of what you know today will be obsolete one year later.”
- “Our youth will be doing jobs we don’t even know exist.”
- “The youth in the community need greater connection with the community and positive experiences to return as adults/entrepreneurs.”
- “The utility issue and how it impacts larger businesses.”
- “Inventor & Entrepreneur groups were new news.”
- “The follow-through to this event is important.”

Other things the participants wanted to share include:

- “Evansville is trying to better deal with growth.”
- “Do something so people see progress. Committee work can be so slow that motivation wanes.”
- “Great idea to involve high school students.”
- “Do this more often, and with more breaks.”
- “I commend the planners on the organization and timely schedule.”
- “This should become a yearly event. It can be used to report on victories as well as to recalibrate efforts.”
- “Find more retail for downtown.”
- “Businesses are not aware of existing resources and programs are also surprisingly uninformed about development in the business community.”
- “The ‘bricks’ of Evansville are a symbol of the closeness and connection we seek. Improve the connections and the growth and vitality will come.”
- “How about a directory of all who attended? And a follow-up report and another summit.”
- “Evansville can develop a competitive advantage with respect to adjoining communities if they take advantage of their physical attributes – creek and lake – and they encourage small business through proactive assistance in regulatory requirements.”
- “People need to step back so they can see the advantage of spending time on events like this. And then, commitment past the event to work together.”
- “Need a directory of businesses.”
- “Evansville businesses need to be more customer-oriented.”



- “It would be neat to play a game like ‘Speed Dating’ but call it ‘Speed Networking’ and have an opportunity to sit with each participant for 3-5 minutes and develop a potential business relationship.”
- “Plenty of questions about ‘next steps.’ There should be a follow-up session to keep the momentum going.”
- “Please plan more activities like this.”
- “Include the school district as a ‘business.’”
- “Do this on a regular basis. It seems that a lot of our businesses have been operating in a vacuum.”
- “Keep this moving.”
- “There is a wide range of public interests, self interest and varied knowledge brought to bear on this subject. I think a more clear identification of these interests and capabilities would be helpful.”